

Spring 1-15-2016

ENG 3701-001: Am Literature: 1800 to Mid-19C

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English 3701 American Literature before the Civil War Spring 2016

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Office hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays 11-12:30, 2-5, and by appointment

In this course, we'll read deeply in the various kinds of literature written in the United States in the first half or so of the 19th century, a period that still stands as one of America's most accomplished in terms of writing and culture. Yet it was also a chaotic, turbulent, and ultimately violent period in the country's history as society dealt with the ongoing practice of enslavement, expansion into the lands of native peoples, immigration from Europe, and a changing, developing industrial economy with widespread implications. The writers of the time were all well aware of these issues, which are reflected in their work in ways we'll explore throughout the semester, with a focus on, among others, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Walt Whitman, Emily Dickinson, Edgar Allan Poe, and Nathaniel Hawthorne.

Work for the close will involve a fair amount of reading, regular attendance and participation in class discussions, frequent in-class writing, and a comprehensive take-home final